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ABSTRACT

This book describes "Revitalize," an arts and aging program developed for the Fine Arts Council of Florida. The rationale behind the program, research involved in its structures, the evolution of ideas, the selection of the Neighborly Center, Inc. as a partner agency, the designation of sites for the program, the choice of artists, and the intent and structure of the program are all examined in the first section, Before Implementation. The next two sections, Implementation and Orientation and Implementation Site-by-Site, present the participating artists' views of the program development and include entries from the artists' journals. The final section contains poems and stories by some of the program participants. (Author/NRB)

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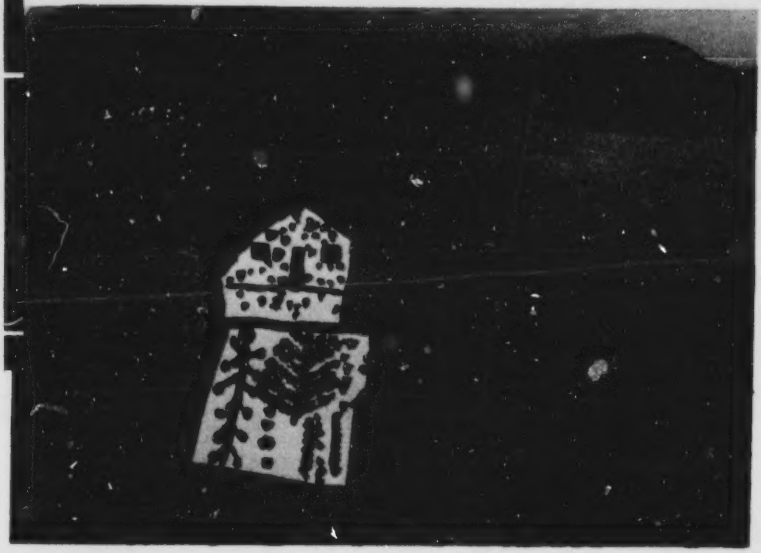
REVITALIZE!

a pilot program in arts/aging



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First Edition

The cover photograph was taken by Karen L. Tucker. The design is by one of the Neighborly Center, Inc. participants at the Jordan Park Project.

All photographs in this book were taken by Karen Loeb and Karen L. Tucker.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

When preparing to document a major program such as *REVITALIZE!*, one person cannot stand responsible. There are others who contribute to the program's success, and they, too, deserve acknowledgment.

To Peggy Hurst, Chairman of the Fine Arts Council of Florida, and to the members of the Council for providing encouragement and initial funding for the program.

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Also, there are many people within our organization who were instrumental in the program. To John Blank, Chairman of the Pinellas County Arts Council, for his continued en-

couragement and support of arts programming in the aging field. Also, to the Council members listed at the end of this book, for the insight which provided the impetus for the program.

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Terrell J. Kuykendall
Project Director
REVITALIZE!

DEDICATION

To Ruth Eckerd

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SECTION ONE

BEFORE IMPLEMENTATION

The primary purpose of this book is to encourage development of arts and aging programs throughout the State of Florida. While developing the *REVITALIZE!* program for the Fine Arts Council of Florida, one factor became apparent: the state had made no major strides to date in the field of arts and aging. One reason for this was that aging agencies felt uncomfortable with the arts world, and arts agencies felt uncomfortable with the aging field. The result was ineffective arts and aging programming. So, a bridge had to be built. This book represents that bridge. It is not a course in theory. Rather it tells of the trials and errors faced by a team of artists who developed and implemented an arts and aging program to be utilized by any interested agency. What is presented here is a program that incorporates the concepts behind existing programs, as well as the advice of gerontologists and experts on aging, to develop a new approach to arts programming with the aging.

WHY DEVELOP ARTS AND AGING PROGRAMS?

Throughout research for this program, I encountered no one in either the arts or aging field who was negative toward the idea of interfacing the two. This led me to be skeptical. I started asking myself questions. Do elderly people need more programs to occupy their time? Is it the responsibility of arts agencies to provide programs for them? If the elderly are truly interested in the arts, why has nothing been done about it up to now? Furthermore, why provide this type of programming when perhaps more essential programming is necessary?

To answer these questions, we must turn to the import-

ance of the arts. The arts are an expression of feeling. Beyond the necessities of health care, housing, and nutrition, many senior citizens share an equal desire for what is a higher quality of life. Not only do the arts provide a higher quality of life, they give young and old alike the opportunity to feel good about themselves. This is important. The arts nurture a feeling of self-respect. A person can be in the best of health and have the security of a good home and well-balanced meals, but if he cannot experience self-respect or the sense of achievement, then he is empty. The arts encourage independence. When retirement arrives, what does an individual do? He may find that employee retirement checks fail to cover expenses and the growing problems of inflation. Gerontologists point out that dependence on others (i.e., relatives, neighbors, etc.) is a major difficulty with which elderly people must cope. Throughout their lives they were independent. Now, perhaps due to poor vision or limited mobility, they must relinquish that independence. Effective arts programming becomes a means for recapturing some of that self-reliance and self-respect of the past.

Believe it or not, there are people in their sixties who have never picked up a paint brush (at least, not in terms of applying it to a canvas). It might not be because they never had the opportunity. They perhaps always thought that art was for other people, people who attended college or people who were wealthy. So, perhaps if the opportunity were presented to them again (or for the first time), the interest would be there.

Finally, are there more useful, more essential programs to which funds could be directed? I contend that if a program can instill self-reliance and self-respect in a person who feels the burden of society and can provide that person with the opportunity to draw, write poetry, or perform for the first, second, or third time, then funding for that program has been well spent. Is it not important for a person to believe in himself again? This is what an arts and aging program can do. And this is what *REVITALIZE!* did.

DESIGNING THE PROGRAM
OR
HOW TO BRING IT ALL TOGETHER WITHOUT LOSING YOUR SANITY OR GETTING LOST IN THE MAZE

This section discusses the steps that occurred before the artists began work. The rationale behind the program, the research procedures involved in its structure, the evolution of ideas, the selection of Neighborly Center, Inc. as the partner agency, the designation of sites for the program, the choice of artists, and the intent and structure of the program, will all be examined.

In order to answer these questions, I need to go back to May of 1978 when the Pinellas County Arts Council was reviewing its programming. Examining the demographics of the county, we learned that the population of Pinellas is estimated at 750,000. Of that population, more than 40 percent figured in the age group of 60 years or older. A quick course in mathematics indicated that nearly 262,000 people are of retirement age. The Arts Council had only two artists working with this sector; a poet and a visual artist conducted six-week class sessions at retirement homes. It did not take a feasibility study to realize that we were not adequately serving the elderly.

At this point, a concerned effort to provide more programming in this field began. The first step was to contact the Area Agency on Aging or, in the case of Pinellas County, the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council.

(The Area Agency on Aging is the agency responsible for the proper spending of Older Americans Act monies in a designated geographic area. In Pinellas County, that area includes both Pinellas and Pasco counties. The Administration on Aging is budgeted by the Federal government to allocate money from the Older Americans Act. That money is filtered

down to a state agency which, in Florida, is the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services. The state agency has district offices that work with local Area Agencies on Aging to develop specific plans for spending the money. These plans are developed through public meetings and mandatory services provided under the Act, such as proper nutrition. The Area Agency oversees and monitors the expenditure and resultant programming monies allocated from the Administration on Aging and the Older Americans Act.)

The Area Agency on Aging was asked what programs were currently being administered in the area of arts and aging. They made mention of only one effective program, and that was the one the Arts Council was conducting. Then they were asked how much money was available for initiating more programs. The response was negative. The Area Agency was interested enough in providing similar programs, but the State Agency did not view it as top priority. Even though requests for this type of programming were top priority with the people, they were of lowest priority with the funding sources.

In August 1978, the National Endowment for the Arts granted a request made by the Pinellas County Arts Council for a "City Spirit" facilitator. The facilitator talked with more than fifteen different groups comprising a cross-section of the county. One group included senior citizens. From the facilitator's report, it was apparent that the Pinellas County Arts Council needed to move ahead in its efforts to provide more programming for the aging.

At this point, the Fine Arts Council of Florida (FACF) inquired about our search for funds to provide programming in this area. After an appraisal of the situation, the FACF met with Arts Council staff and representatives of agencies on aging. In the end, they asked the Arts Council to submit a position paper on how to design a pilot program in the arts and aging field.

The first step in designing this program was to research the field of arts and aging around the country. Ms. Jackie Sunderland of the National Center on Arts and Aging was the

first resource. Ms. Sunderland recommended two books: *Compas* and *Arts and the Aging / An Agenda For Action.* From these two resources, I acquired a feel for the mood of the nation with regard to arts and aging programs.

During my research, I requested from Representative C. W. "Bill" Young of Pinellas County any information on aging programs that dealt with arts in the nation. His information packet gave me insight into the mood of the Congress concerning the aging. The information also provided valuable documentary statistics for constructing the proposal.

I then examined more closely the reports submitted by the two Pinellas County Arts Council artists. The visual artist stated that the people she worked with were more interested in "doing" than in structured learning. The poet felt that response was more positive in a group situation than on a one-to-one basis. Both artists felt that many people went unreached because they (the artists) did not have the time to touch everyone. Their concern was in coming up with a program that would initiate response from all participants. So, my first task in designing the proposal was to develop a program that would not predetermine what was to take place in specific sessions. If people were interested in drama and were offered a poet, then money would be wasted. It became clear to me that deciding on what types of arts programs people should receive was not a realistic approach. Rather, I wanted to design a program in which the people would decide what would take place. The program would require an inbred flexibility in order to satisfy the people's desires.

The final problem in writing the proposal was taking into account the continuation of the program. The actual writing of the proposal did not guarantee that the program would be refunded, only that it would end on June 30, 1979. I realized the program would be useless if it were started with no concern given to its conclusion. I wanted, therefore, to continue the program even if the artists were no longer at the sites. My chief complaint about many grant programs is that the administering agency often fails to worry as sufficiently about the end of a program as it does about the program per-

petuating. My concern was to end the program in such a way that it could be continued by its participants.

Consequently, I knew I wanted to design a program in which the participants would take part in the programming decisions, the artists would be flexible enough to work within any disciplines and the participants would determine the continuation of the program.

After finalizing these goals, the Arts Council met with representatives from Neighborly Center, Inc., to discuss possible sites for the program. Neighborly Center, Inc. directs the nutrition program for Pinellas County under the Older Americans Act of 1973. The nutrition program provides one hot meal per day for people sixty years of age or older. This meal often constitutes the social activity of the day for many of these individuals. They sit and talk or listen to a scheduled lecturer. Neighborly Center, Inc. became very interested in the concept of a continuing program at its sites. The sites included church recreation halls and community centers; in short, places where participants could be served their meals. Neighborly Center, Inc.'s enthusiasm for the program resulted from previous efforts to motivate people into trying constructive activities. Neighborly Center, Inc. agreed to make available all of its resources in order to make the program work.

After this information gathering period, the position paper was completed and sent to the Fine Arts Council of Florida.

POSITION PAPER ON ARTS' ROLE IN THE AGING FIELD IN PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA

In the past five years, five major programs involving arts and aging have been initiated in the United States. Of these programs, none originated in Florida. Considering that Florida ranks fourth in states with a major population of

citizens 55 years or older, major arts programming in the field of aging has been drastically overlooked.

The elderly, 55 years or older, constitute more than 50 percent of Pinellas County's residents. This places Pinellas County foremost in Florida with respect to density of elderly population. At present, the Pinellas County Arts Council administers an aging program in cooperation with the Interfaith Coalition on Aging. The program, as successful as it is, does not carry the intensity to influence funding sources concerned with aging programs.

Studies show that arts programming is high priority with senior citizens, if not with the bureaucracy of the state. Health and Rehabilitative Services is the agency responsible for establishing priorities for Older Americans Act funds on the state level. Locally, the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council has attempted to secure funding for arts programming under the Older Americans Act without success.

In order to open up new avenues of funding for similar programs throughout Florida, a change in attitude must transpire.

The Fine Arts Council of Florida has designated $10,000 to be used in the field of aging in their Expansion Arts Program. With this $10,000, the Pinellas County Arts Council would be able to initiate a program similar to the existing program for the aging. This program, however, would not provide the necessary results. First and foremost, a quality program must be designed with artists of exceptional abilities. The artists not only must have the credentials befitting an artist, they also must have the ability to relate to and communicate with senior citizens. Therefore, selecting quality artists will be first priority. In addition to the artists' abilities to implement the program, they must be capable of documenting each phase of the program. Extensive documentation is essential. Other arts and aging programs have chosen to document results rather than the program itself. In this proposed model program, documentation will begin on day one. During this survey period, orientation sessions

for the artists will be arranged to offer insight into the field of gerontology. These sessions will provide artists with expert advice on what will or will not work with senior citizens (see Schedule). From the first day, artists will keep a daily log of their impressions of the program. Periodically, participants will be surveyed according to their impressions and expectations of the program. After the program has been in operation, emphasis will be placed on publicizing the activities of the program via the media. This publicity will not be limited to Pinellas County. The Fine Arts Council of Florida, Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council, Center on Arts and Aging, and National Endowment for the Arts will assist in giving the program state-wide and national impact.

Through careful research and investigation, the Pinellas County Arts Council sees a budget of $28,000 as realistic for initiating and implementing the program. To acquire the additional money, the Pinellas County Arts Council seeks to work in conjunction with the Fine Arts Council of Florida. The Arts Council is prepared to provide $9,000 in local matching funds for the program.

The Pinellas County Arts Council requests that the Fine Arts Council of Florida appropriate an additional $9,000 to the Expansion Arts Program.

At present, Florida arts organizations are able to present programs in the field of aging. However, with Proposition 13 firmly in the public eye, we cannot be content with merely presenting a program. We must be prepared to justify that program.

THE MODEL PROJECT

At the Fine Arts Council of Florida's meeting in October, 1978, the position paper was approved. The Fine Arts Council of Florida asked the Pinellas County Arts Council for a grant proposal on the arts/aging program in order to implement the pilot program.

ARTS AND AGING PROPOSAL

The Pinellas County Arts Council will initiate an eight-month arts and aging program, designed for use throughout the State of Florida. Unlike other aging programs, this program will specifically emphasize documentation. Also, it will serve as a comparison/contrast for other arts/aging programs.

The arts/aging program will be developed at three different Pinellas County locations, each a congregate dining area. These facilities are administered by Neighborly Center, Inc., an organization equipped to transport senior citizens to specific locations throughout the county. These dining areas are well-suited as control environments and will serve to illustrate similarities and differences in the success of the program. The program is scheduled to begin in January, 1979, at which time the artists will begin their residencies at the three designated locations.

Artists considered for this program will be selected according to two basic criteria. First, the quality of their work must be of the highest caliber. Second, they must have the ability to relate to senior citizens and communicate their particular art form accordingly. Of the four artists selected, two will be visual artists (i.e., sculptor, painter, and/or photographer), one will be a performing artist (i.e., dancer, theatre specialist, or musician), and one will be a writer (of prose and/or poetry). Necessity dictates that the artists work as a team within the designated environment. Artists will attend orientation sessions to gain insight into the field of gerontology. Expert advice will be offered on what will or will not succeed with senior citizens.

Documentation is an integral part of the program. It will be accomplished on three levels. Artists will keep a journal of their progress and experiences; participants will intermittently be asked their impressions of and reactions to the program; and media coverage will be utilized.

This program was intended to solve the problems that were apparent during the research. The team approach solved the problem of being able to reach a large group.

ONE WRITER, ONE PERFORMING ARTIST, TWO VISUAL ARTISTS

To avoid predetermination of activities at the sites, the disciplines selected had to be diverse enough to afford a variety of artistic experiences. It was decided that a writer was needed to provide the opportunity to communicate through the written word; a performing artist through the spoken word; and visual artists through the unspoken or unwritten word. Why *two* visual artists? This may seem to be a luxury, but a case can be made in light of visual arts and their vast scope. I tried to present two artists who were accomplished in their own right, but who also approached their work from different viewpoints. This decision gave program participants an exciting opportunity to sample the broad spectrum of visual arts' techniques and theories.

SELECTION OF THE ARTISTS

To find the best artists for the program, the Pinellas County Arts Council sent announcements to all Florida arts councils and arts centers, and publicized the positions in major area newspapers. As a result of that publicity, we received more than forty applications.

The interview sessions were divided into two parts. The first allowed us to evaluate two specific points; namely, the artist's credentials and expertise in his or her own discipline, and the artist's flexibility in dealing with the interview situation. Because of the nature of the program, the artists selected would need to be flexible under varying conditions. So, with that in mind, artists were interviewed on the streets and in coffee shops; that is, in any situation that was out of the ordinary. I then recorded their reactions and adaptability to these situations in my evaluation of the interview.

Ten artists were called back for a second interview. This

interview was handled mainly by the executive director of the Arts Council. It gave me a chance to confirm my first impressions and provided me with a second opinion as well.

Finally, the artists were selected. Considering the pressures of the program and the intensity of working closely with one another, the following artists were selected and ultimately *completed* the program: visual artists, Daisy Koenig and Karen Tucker; and writer, David Dial.

As is the case with any program that demands intense planning and dependence on team interaction, it is reasonable to accept that not all the artists that began the program would continue to completion. This was the case in the performing arts position. Due to unforseen problems the performing artist was dismissed and replaced by a second performing artist: Geoff Todd. Geoff is a professional actor from England who was on hiatus from Florida Studio Theatre in Sarasota. He was hired to complete the last two months of *"REVITALIZE!"* and is commended for his role in the program. His energy and outlook brought a new dimension to the program and served to boost the program in its final stage.

Photo courtesy of St. Petersburg Times

DAISY KOENIG

STATEMENT BY THE ARTIST:

Throughout my years, I have developed a sensitive awareness toward nature and people, and love to involve myself with both. I have

very strong intuitive feelings and have learned that they cannot be ignored. I wish to always have a just and impartial feeling toward all people, art, and life in general. Working with the elderly has been a wonderful experience. I have learned from them, and have received much joy from seeing their faces light up after having created something that they thought they could never do. There is no age limit in the creative process; all they need is the chance to create in order to make their lives more meaningful.

Born August 4, 1917, Tampa, Florida.

After the death of her father, she spent her formative years with a grandmother who encouraged her to express herself in a creative way. Piano study was started in the early teens and a great love of music developed. She attended Florida Southern College for two years on a music scholarship, followed by a short sojourn at Florida State University as a psychology major. During WWII she left college for an executive secretarial position with the American Red Cross, followed by marriage to a Naval officer and the birth of two children. After another child and raising a family, she finally received a BA in Fine Arts (Major, Painting) from the University of South Florida, 1963. In 1969, she received an MFA (Major, Painting, Minor, Art History, 32 hours over MFA). As Curator in Humanities at the University of South Florida, she began teaching painting workshops in 1966 and continued there until 1974. She became an Instructor in Fine Arts at Hillsborough Community College in 1974, teaching Art History and Painting, and she also instructed painting classes at Tampa Bay Art Center and Florida Gulf Coast Art Center. Since the early 1960's, she has received numerous awards and has exhibited in many local and national exhibitions, including the Society of the Four Arts, National Annual Exhibition; Twenty Florida Artists, 1973 Miami; Twenty-seven Florida Painters, St. Petersburg Museum of Fine Arts, 1973; Professional Women Artists of Florida, University of Miami, 1976, etc. Her work is represented in numerous corporate and private collections, including University of South Florida Permanent Collection; General Telephone; Tampa International Airport; First Financial Tower, Tampa, etc. Gallery affiliations are Hodgell-Hartman Gallery, Sarasota; Galleries International, Winter Park; Le Moyne Art Foundation, Tallahassee; and others. One-man shows have been held at Trend House Gallery, Tampa Bay Art Center, Artist Market Gallery, Clearwater,- Ridge Art Association, Winter Haven, Tampa Public Library, and Thesis Exhibition, USF. Other activities include Exhibition Chairman, Tampa Bay Art Center, two years; Member, Board of Directors, Tampa Bay Art Center, seven years; Member, Acquisition Committee, at present; tour of major galleries in Europe, 1961 and 1971; and tour of Greece and Egypt in 1977.

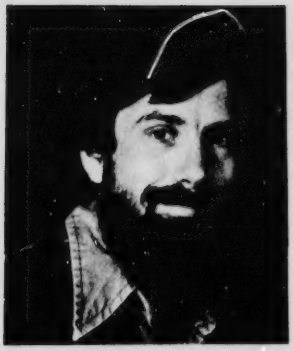


Photo courtesy of St. Petersburg Times

DAVID DIAL

Nothing in my life story tells me how I became a writer. Now the sources seemed braided and unconscious . . . as visual as dreams but floating more, like daylight. Jung could probably figure it out. Freud, I bet, wouldn't have a clue . . . .

My mother displayed a tendency to clam up on most subjects beyond the present moment. She read to me out of the Book of Knowledge, and certainly — to my mind — was a convincing co-conspirator, on those few occasions together, in the willful suspension of disbelief. My father, on the other couch, descended from a long line of storytellers. (At least, I think it was a long line: my grandfather, Thomas Jefferson Dial, occupied a favored bench in the square when he needed to be in town. He also swapped knives and demolished checker opponents. Before him, I know nearly nothing.) My father's gift, however, extended elsewhere among my siblings, or became altogether diffuse among us four, and I picked up the need for creative self-expression quite indirectly and competitively — through sports. My father was a coach, and my outdoor court became my studio.

They lived, and I grew up, in the rural country of Southern Illinois, on a site formerly occupied by a one-room school. There were dogs — both ours and wild — and a horse my brother and I thought was paid for with our saved-up silver dollars. Our driveway was over a quarter-mile long; snowbound was not the title of the poem. I was bussed nearly every day of my schooling. I practiced basketball endlessly, versing myself against tall ghosts like Bill Russell or Abe Lincoln — there was, in short, a lot of rural lore. I began to love to read.

I grew up some more at college, at the Great University in the Sky: the University of Illinois. It was there I took my first writing courses, learning short fiction techniques and receiving guarded enthusiasm from Paul Friedman and Mark Costello (both fine writers), and from Nuel Pharr Davis (a strange and enthralling teacher).

I graduated. I got a job; I moved. I grew lonely. To stop foundering — there was a lot of air in my brain — I applied to graduate schools

and eventually accepted the acceptance of Bowling Green State University (it's in Ohio). The end of two years there found me blowing it out again, on paper mostly, and I felt eager to leave the Midwest and venturesome enough to stab Florida's spot on the map. (I once heard of someone saying, "I've lived in seven states, the last three in Florida.")

Before *REVITALIZE!*, I worked for the City of St. Petersburg with a bunch of other artists and writers. I collaborated on a full-length screenplay. (That was a novel for me.) Mostly though, I taught community creative writing classes, peopled almost exclusively by senior citizens. Buddy Hackett said the average age in St. Pete is "deceased," but I don't think so. I began to realize then what seems confirmed by this present job — that the disciplines of daily working life common to the pasts of most all of our retirees are similar (and almost somehow superior) to those required of artists. (Superior because of engendered legacy; everyone who was a hard worker still is. Volunteer kitchen workers at the Neighborly Center, Inc. even dry the sink, while the artists sometimes kill themselves when they can no longer work.)

I know people who are dying. Their doctors say so. Yet they seem to have aged less than my parents; less, it seems on many days, than me. Their disciplines, respective of their generation — which look mostly like politeness and quite formal outward interest . . . carriage of their years — hold them green and golden, and a childlike singing is heard from the chains. They look more composed than many fiction writers I've seen. They sing often.

REVITALIZE! has brought me in contact with probably 200 senior citizens. Some were never hard workers before, and so I hardly know them. Many don't write at all, nor read, and a few speak only Greek. (At least to me.) I work with only one fiction writer. I thought it was odd, but it isn't; fiction right now is burgeoning and golden. New techniques by the hand of anyone talented have contributed to the game more than flair and less a vision-distinct flavor than can easily be apprehended by those who grew up with Fitzgerald, Wolfe & Woolf. In most markets, new fiction out-competes old.

So the writing talent goes into poetry, revolutionized before their growing up by Whitman et. al. Even the idea of non-rhyming seems easily grasped. Or, there are autobiographies begun, though I don't know who will finish. I know one man and one woman, at different sites, who are tall-tales artists.

Because of the media mixture of my co-workers, I know also some very fine painters, and a few actors, and at least one dramatic reader. There are many singers. Since Jordan Park Neighborly Center one day became transferred into a studio, it has no longer seemed like an institution. For all I care, that could happen twice more.

Photo courtesy of St. Petersburg Times

KAREN TUCKER

It is recorded that Lewis Tucker received a parcel of land in the Tampa Bay Area in 1830 as compensation for his participation in the Seminole Indian wars. Karen L. Tucker, artist, had not been conceived then, but great great grandfather Lewis' Indian fighting probably had a lot to do with that conception.

I grew up in Tampa and Temple Terrace, Florida, in the 1950's, with mangrove and cabbage palms as my landscape. I roasted marshmallows on palmetto frond skewers and snickered at the tourists in their turquoise Bermuda shorts and flamingo blouses.

My first run-in with art was at age three when I entered a coloring contest along with my older sister. I painted everything black. My sister won a Ginny doll and I didn't, but my parents bought me one. They were worried about me. Growing up, I was often encouraged to draw. It was used as a diversion to keep me quiet in church. My first real commitment to art was when I gave up the clarinet to take art in high school.

After high school, the natural thing to do was to go off to college and study art. I did. I attended Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida, and was fascinated to learn that there was more to art than meets the eye. I developed a crush on Robert Rauschenburg and Jan Van Eyck. I could mix equal values with equal intensity, develop a photographic print with a black black value and build an unwarpable canvas stretcher. I could also speak Italian, in a pinch. In 1972, I graduated and returned to Tampa as an artist in the chic, madcap world of advertising. After rubbing my sleeves in rubber cement for a few months, I decided to return to school. Not being entirely certain of my commitment, I chose an institution close at hand. In 1975, I received my M.A. in Art Education from the University of South Florida and was ready to try anything. I taught some in public high schools and served as an instructor of drawing and design at Hillsborough Commu-

nity College for a few years. I designed a signage system for the new University of South Florida Library, staged exhibits of the State Fair, and recreated religious murals for Sacred Heart Church. During all of this, I painted and exhibited my work. At last I began to think of myself as an artist.

In 1977, 1978, before becoming involved with the *REVITALIZE!* program, I worked as an artist-in-residence in a community arts program in Tarpon Springs, entitled "Tarpon Art Power." As part of the program, I designed and painted outdoor murals depicting the Greek and pioneer heritages of the city, and conducted classes and workshops.

My recent paintings and drawings are based on Florida landscape features. I have carefully examined details of the interviewing shapes of typical coastal foliage, in an effort to free myself from preconceived images.

My painting involves a taking apart, exploring, examining process and creates distorted mental and visual experiences caused by its photographic conception. Participating in this model program of arts and aging offers emotional as well as mental stimulation. It has forced my concentration as an artist to open up, to react, to feel images and situations as a whole instead of being trapped in details in my quest of visual understanding.

The reward of working in this program has been the experience of seeing the arts discovered, appreciated, expressed, and questioned. It has also been the pain of frustration and pressure in coordinating and discovering the right approaches, activities and goals with the right people and situations.

JOURNALS

Each artist kept a diary or journal of his or her reactions, comments, and/or fears regarding the program. It will become apparent while reading this book that each artist saw the program differently. The journals were very beneficial to me as project director. Whenever they were feeling frustrated, their journals reflected it. If they failed to write in their journals, I knew something was troubling them. The journals gave me a good idea of how the program was developing. The artists spoke from their own perspective, and each was unique. As it seemed inappropriate to give the artists a format for their journals, I let them write according to their own style and needs.

SELECTION OF SITES

Once the program got the go-ahead, I met with Neighborly Center, Inc., to devise a procedure for selecting the sites. Neighborly Center, Inc. operates twenty-two congregate dining sites in Pinellas County, and I suspected that a plan was needed to evaluate these sites. As I was unable to visit each one as suggested, I eventually visited sixteen. Out of those sixteen, six sites were selected as possibilities.

Finally, based on their location in the county, three sites were chosen. Because the Pinellas County Arts Council is a county-wide organization, it was critical that the program encompass all of Pinellas. The enthusiasm expressed by the site manager and the space available at each site were also carefully considered. Space needed to vary from large to small so that, in the final evaluation, the ideal physical set-up for the program could be determined.

The three sites selected were the Jordan Park project in St. Petersburg (south Pinellas County), the Clearwater Dining Program in Clearwater (mid-Pinellas County), and the Tarpon Springs Tourist Club in Tarpon Springs (north Pinellas County). All three had enthusiastic site managers, and all three varied in size and available space. (See the Orientation and Implementation sections of this book for more on individual sites and site managers.)

REVITALIZE!

The name for the program came as a result of a comment made by one of the site managers. She told me that I was not providing arts for the aging, but rather was initiating, through the arts, a *revitalizing* process. "We do not age anyone here, we *revitalize!*" And the name stuck.

It was not until the artists met for the first time that I told them what was going to take place. They were going to develop programs based on their grouped talents. There were

no rules. They would have a period of time in which to meet the people and then, they, the artists, would plan programs that could continue after their departure. Their focus was to be on arts programming, not classroom instruction. Activities would lead to goals. If that goal were a play, and various art forms were integrated, fine. If the goal were a cookbook which involved writing, designing, and editing, fine. But the program needed to center around group projects involving a number of participants. Through group participation, individual skills would develop.

This was all the information I gave the artists. I did not want to impose my personal goals on them. Yes, I would keep them on track but, no, I would not interfere with their creativity.

SECTION TWO

IMPLEMENTATION AND ORIENTATION

The next two sections are divided into two parts. The artists' point of view of this program will be presented first. Periodically, I will interrupt their presentation to expand upon their statements; these interruptions will be in italics.

The artists worked closely on these sections and this is their collective impression of the program. The artists decided that David Dial, as a professional writer, would be the natural choice to take their collective thoughts and present their views. So, even though there is one person speaking, the reader should understand that the views expressed are those of all the artists: Karen, Daisy, Geoff, and David.

Our intention in this section is to show the process. We are attempting to present an accurate presentation of "*REVITALIZE!*", including the problems and sometimes the solution.

INTRODUCTION

There was no book like this one to help dictate the course of our program. The project director held most of the blueprint in his head; he didn't write much of it down because he knew it would change. (You could say, ". . . change before the ink had dried," but that image is only good to use with elderly people, whose memories pre-date Bic pens.)

However, if said director *had* written said blueprint, here's what it would have looked like: The Team of Four Artists goes through an Orientation process, which lasts a Month; The Team of Four then holds a Planning Session in which to develop separate programs for Each of the Three Congregate Dining Sites; Each Separate Program is then Implemented with an Eye toward meeting the Three Administrative Goals.

The Three Administrative (Overall Program) Goals for *REVITALIZE!* were as follows: 1. to establish a program that could continue at each site *after* the *REVITALIZE!* project had ended; 2. to encourage new funding sources to take an interest in Arts in Aging projects; 3. to produce this book as a guide for any further projects.

In this introduction, the artists present an accurate description of the administrative structure of the program. I was indeed striving to keep the artists attentive to the program and not to the problems inherent to its administration.

I want to point out here that the artists defined their own individual goals. Their search for excellence in their performances far exceeded any projected goals I could have define programmatically.

ORIENTATION
THE ARTISTS AND THE SITES

The artists and the project director (plus one or two interested parties), met for two full days with Mr. William Simpson of the Family Counseling Center of Pinellas County. These sessions took place immediately after the final hiring . . . signing away of rights . . . was executed. In other words, no one knew each other well, and it was during the orientation with Mr. Simpson that the artists gained their first impressions of how each regarded the elderly as a minority group, or how each regarded the challenges and obligations of the project to be done.

Bill Simpson's experience with elderly people is very thorough. He has counseled many of that age group from a wide variety of backgrounds; he has also studied the problems of senior citizenhood in the twentieth century quite formally, and will soon receive his Master's degree in gerontology from the University of South Florida.

Bill Simpson is also a most patient man — currently tied with 1,427 others for second place in All-Time Patience (just behind the echelon of saints).

Orientation sessions occurred as a result of talks with the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council. Concern centered around the artists working within a field that was unfamiliar to them. Accordingly, I requested that Mr. William Simpson of the Family Counseling Center conduct gerontology sessions. Ms. Jackie Sunderland suggested that each session be videotaped in order to assist in the development of other arts and aging problems throughout the state.

Consulting with Bill Simpson, I asked that the artists be informed of the demographic statistics regarding the aging in Pinellas County so that they could better comprehend the program's added importance for the county. Bill went on to design sessions that would make the artists aware of their own stereotyped image of older people and would encourage

the artists to develop an alternate attitude. These sessions were scheduled for the first two days the artists worked and allowed them time to develop a group identity. This was an important aspect of the program. When artists are to work as closely as these did, they need to define their roles at the outset. Process began in the gerontology sessions and continued throughout the orientation period.

It is interesting to note in the next paragraph that the artists use four different terms to describe the program's participants. This brings out one of the first problems we faced in the program. Senior citizens, elderly, old-age, or aging all seemed somewhat condescending and excessive labels to use. When asked which label was correct, Bill Simpson could offer no pat answer. "Whatever feels comfortable to you," he added. This was very disconcerting until we started to work with the people. Rather than 'senior citizens' or 'the elderly,' they became Ruth, Anne, Hank, or Mrs. Ray. It was apparent that people 60 years of age and older could no more be stereotyped than people who are 35.

These two main attributes — experience and patience — began to seem connubial as the sessions went on. Mr. Simpson led the artists through discussions of theories on aging and their applications to people we might encounter; he asked for our impressions of elderly people as a group, and countered with some material that indicated how elderly people considered themselves; he encouraged each of us to recall his own experiences with senior citizens, and joined those discussions from his professional perspective. He gave out facts on common medical problems and their accompanying psychological strain, led us through role playing exercises (which were *not* embarrassing), and gave fairly total exposure to the substance and myth of old-age stereotypes.

The lesson seemed always to be that these people were individuals, and a way could be found to communicate with any of them, given sufficient patience on our parts. And none of us doubted this lesson. Even though we probably had not

doubted it before, the sessions with Bill Simpson seemed to act as a lens for our group to see through to the future, and perhaps what we saw was that a thorough-going, patient approach might help us to focus on the individuals we were to work with, without obstruction from any blinders we may have picked up from some life somewhere.

The sum of what we learned is that the older a person gets, the more major adjustments he must make . . . as he retires, continues to lose physical abilities, begins to lose friends and perhaps loses his spouse . . . until his self-image can suffer greatly. Then he is prey to stereotyping, believing — even passionately — that he is incapable when he is not.

The participation of such a person in an arts project should provide him a clearer mirror.

Orientation continued less formally over the course of four weeks. During that first month, the artists visited each site regularly, gaining faces and personalities to substitute for Mr. Simpson's data and case studies. Introductions were made, and there emerged a pretty clear overview of operations at the sites. There were many similarities among the three, even though they were scattered from top to bottom in the county.

The main observation we made proved also to be one of our chief (scheduling) frustrations throughout the course of the project: most of the people arrived at the site near the time of the meal, and nearly everyone left soon after eating. There was very little time left in between in which to work. Planning art activities for any site would always be difficult, then, because the clientele was too numerous for us to work continually with the whole group, yet attendance was too bunched around the meal for us to establish useful small group identity.

SCHEDULING

Scheduling turned out to be the most frustrating aspect of the program. First, the artists were confronted with a very

short period of time in which to complete the program. Then there were three sites. The initial schedule, therefore, was based on the idea of visiting each site the same number of times per week. However, three sites and five days did not divide equally. With that in mind, I saw that there were only two times in the day that participants could take part in the program — before and after lunch. So I had ten work sessions to deal with instead of five. The first schedule, then, looked like this:

Monday/morning . . . . . *Tarpon Springs*
/afternoon . . . . . *Clearwater*
Tuesday/morning . . . . . *St. Petersburg*
/afternoon . . . . . *Clearwater*
Wednesday/morning . . . . . *Tarpon Springs*
/afternoon . . . . . *Tarpon Springs*
Thursday /morning . . . . . *St. Petersburg*
/afternoon . . . . . *Clearwater*
Friday/morning . . . . . *St. Petersburg*
/afternoon . . . . . *planning session*

It was anticipated that this schedule would suit our needs. However, after a week and a half, two problems arose:

1. On no day were we at Clearwater in the morning. Since everyone left after lunch, morning seemed to be the best time.

2. The driving distance between sites in a single day was so much that by the time the artists arrived, the participants had left.

Taking these considerations into account, a second schedule was devised:

Monday/morning . . . . . *Tarpon Springs*
/afternoon . . . . . *Clearwater*
Tuesday/morning . . . . . *Clearwater*
/afternoon . . . . . *Clearwater*
Wednesday /morning . . . . . *Tarpon Springs*
/afternoon . . . . . *Tarpon Springs*
Thursday /morning . . . . . *St. Petersburg*
/afternoon . . . . . *Clearwater*

Friday /morning ..... *St. Petersburg*
/afternoon. ..... *planning session*

When this schedule was implemented, the artists began to develop a following. People looked forward to their next visit. The afternoon sessions continued to pose problems, except at Tarpon Springs. There, the artists' all-day session on Wednesdays encouraged participants to remain after the meal. It became obvious that if the artists were able to spend an entire day at each site, they would develop the kind of following they had at Tarpon Springs. However, the framework of three sites and five days presented logistical problems. Finally, it occurred to me to think in terms of three-week scheduling instead of one week at a time. The program could then accommodate an entire day at each site. An added plus was that the artists could spend two consecutive days at each site. The three-week schedule looked like this:

FIRST WEEK:
Monday ..... *Tarpon Springs*
Tuesday ..... *Tarpon Springs*
Wednesday ..... *St. Petersburg*
Thursday ..... *St. Petersburg*
Friday ..... *Clearwater*

SECOND WEEK:
Monday ..... *Clearwater*
Tuesday ..... *Clearwater*
Wednesday ..... *Tarpon Springs*
Thursday ..... *Tarpon Springs*
Friday ..... *St. Petersburg*

THIRD WEEK:
Monday ..... *St. Petersburg*
Tuesday ..... *St. Petersburg*
Wednesday ..... *Clearwater*
Thursday ..... *Clearwater*
Friday ..... *Tarpon Springs*

This schedule proved to be ideal. It gave the artists the opportunity to stimulate interest in the morning and to develop a carry-over activity into the afternoon. Another advantage was that the artists could develop successive two-day programs instead of having to cope with a break between activities. The only drawback was that program participants often had a difficult time distinguishing between week one, week two, and week three. When site managers began posting a week-to-week schedule of site visits, the problem was alleviated.

Near the end of the program, I initiated one final change in the schedule. It involved studio days. Once a week, each artist was given a studio day in which to work on individual projects. The program had intensified to a point where the artists had no time to pursue their own work. Studio days allowed them that time and provided a refreshing pause in the week's programming.

Space provided a similar obstacle to planning. The Jordan Park and Tarpon Springs sites are both large, barnlike facilities. Each has a piano, several rows of tables, at least eighty dinners per day, and horrible acoustics. The Clearwater site is much smaller, but the dining room walls there not only hold the noise, but serve to amplify it until, after five minutes, it seems to build echoes in the innermost brain cells. Thankfully, there is no piano at Clearwater.

During the first month, the noise did not distract us as much as it often did later, because we most often worked with the whole group, wanting everyone to get used to us instead of holding or continuing marathon conversations with the neighbors. At Jordan Park and Tarpon, there were p.a. systems, and we used the microphones to command attention (at the start), much like any other formal program on the schedule.

We would announce an activity – one line of a poem per person, one image each for a group mural, once or twice the outline of a dramatic situation in which movement was central – and then we'd disperse among the tables to encourage

volunteers. Even those who didn't participate, or did so minimally, were usually quiet to see what got done.

Tarpon Springs differed from Jordan Park in one other respect. At the Tarpon Springs site, there was a raised stage which lent itself well to theatrical productions. At the Jordan Park site, most performing arts activities took place around a piano. The point being, the layout of the sites was not identical.

What got done was impermanent and imperfect. We had no clear goal to try to build toward. We were often bumped from our time by a previously engaged speaker or program. (Each site gets a nutrition lecture once a week. Attendance is required for all present. One week our group heard the pros and cons of tuna fish three times.)

Given time and space limitations and a schedule which at first included an hour a day on U.S. 19, our activities bore little resemblance to any type of classroom teaching. The activities of the first month were mainly trial, so that we could generally assess capabilities and, more importantly, establish communication. We kept telling the people we would be back.

NO PRESCRIBED GOAL / CLASSROOM TEACHING

In these two paragraphs, the artists address two important points. During the program's orientation period, according to the artists, no clear artistic goal was established. However, I knew from my own research in this field that the immediate goal for the artists was to become acquainted with the people. Taking the participants' point of view, four artists — strange to them — were entering their lives to provide pro-

grams of which they (the participants) were somewhat unsure. Naturally, they were cautious. What the artists had to do was gradually become a part of the participants' lives. The gerontology workshop had taught us that although older people are open to change, they are cautious about it. So, in that four- to six-week period, all I asked of the artists was to get to know the people, not as elderly, but as John and Mary.

The second point involved a persistent disagreement in philosophy. Most of the artists' experiences prior to the program centered around the classroom, either in a school environment or at a community center. But REVITALIZE! was not designed to take the classroom approach. In a classroom atmosphere, it is the people who take the initiative and want to learn more about writing, painting, or drawing. This was not the case with this program. In some instances, the people had never written or painted before, and the artists had to motivate them to do so. Why take this approach? It is fairly obvious that art can have a certain impact on those people who have experienced it through high school or college. My belief is that if art is to have a fuller impact, it must be directed at those people who question their interest in art because they have never formally experienced it. So, my approach involved arts programming rather than classroom instruction. In that way, people could experience art and learn for themselves whether or not they were interested.

As we came again and again, we noticed more similarities. Each site was led by a site manager — a professional who was not herself (in all three cases) a senior citizen. Each site manager presided over a site council, which was made up of seniors who met, usually monthly, to discuss any grievance, special planning, and routine site business. Among the council members were many natural leaders who later helped us carry out our programs.

Other similarities existed, but the most striking one was that in each group we quite early found individuals who fascinated us with their experiences, talent, or willingness to try something new.

Dissimilarities were equally abundant. Built-in, even. Jordan Park in St. Petersburg is an all-black center, on the edge of a housing project, across the street from an interstate building project, in the middle of a desolate neighborhood. There is a small park behind the building, but it is filled with broken glass . . . very few children. There was a strong interest in Gospel music, generally low-level reading and writing skills, and a more rampant sedentaryism than at either of the other sites.

Our site in Clearwater was called the Clearwater Dining Program. The people there were generally the youngest, healthiest, and most middle class of any of our groups. They were also the busiest, with most driving their own cars instead of taking the van — and most driving off to bridge clubs or to Pennsylvania right after lunch. They met at the site, but they seemed also to meet anywhere else in town. For some of our team, this group reminded us the most of our parents. They met at the site, but they seemed also to meet anywhere

Tarpon Springs, Florida, is thoroughly flavored in Greek. Possibly a third of the clientele at the neighborly center there were Greek: several spoke Greek only and almost all of that group had been immigrants. Another sub-group was black (also Gospel-oriented), and the last was a grab bag of mostly Northerners settled later in Tarpon. A real melting pot, which seemed quite well blended in spirit. The building sits between two bayous, among oaks older than the people . . . . Inside is a stage, and outside a bandshell, which did later provide relief from the noise.

So, in the first month, we were oriented. Some things were alike and some were different, at the sites. We liked getting to know these people that Bill Simpson had pointed us toward. . . . But we were also getting itchy to try something more ambitious, i.e., something more organized. So we had a planning session.

PLANNING
THE ARTISTS AND THE SITES

The main goal of the planning session was to develop a separate project for each site. The phase for implementing those projects was to stretch over the next sixteen weeks, so it was clearly important to build in the possibility of adjustment to each one. We planned, based on what we knew about the character and characters of each site; since we would learn more still as we went, we also tried not to structure any program too rigidly.

A note on the session itself: it lasted two days. This may seem short, but at the time it seemed like an O'Neill night. Very few suggestions were either unanimous in appeal or immediate in acceptance. Whether it was a fair hearing of *all* possible approaches or not, decisions finally had to be made. There was some strain. This must be the nature of four different artists from quite different media sitting down together over something important.

Here the artists make comment on the major planning session, the session that set forth key programmatic ideas and their systematic implementation. What they neglect to mention are the weekly planning sessions that led up to the major session. At the end of each week, the artists met with me to discuss the week's events. From an administrative standpoint, this allowed the artists to relieve certain frustrations and anxieties. Also, it conditioned the artists regarding their daily evaluation of the program. At each planning session, the next week's activities were laid out. Based on specific information — such as "they're not interested in writing because they cannot read," — activities could be planned accordingly. If an activity worked, then the next week's objective would be to explore another area to see if the interest was there as well. Each week, the artists and I knew exactly what activity was to be developed and the rationale behind it. So, with this planning background, we arrived at the major planning session.

The artists speak of the major planning session as being an O'Neill night; it was just that. Prior to the session, the artists were asked to answer three questions on paper and to bring them along. The three questions were: 1) from your viewpoint as an individual artist and based on your knowledge of the people at each site, what activity would you like to see take place at Jordan Park, Tarpon Springs, and Clearwater? 2) Putting aside your own artistic discipline and recognizing the work of the other artists, what activity would you plan for each site? 3) Finally, what activity would you not plan for each site?

The artists realized that the activities in question were the goals of the program and that these goals were to be continued after the artists left. The reason why the session became an O'Neill night was due in part to the indecision of one artist as opposed to the dogmatic zeal of another. In this type of decision-making, all views must be considered before a final decision can be made. Periodically, however, I had to interject so as to keep the artists from going too far afield. There also was a tendency for personality conflicts to surface. That is when, administratively, the artists have to rely on their professionalism.

When the session finally broke after two days, goals had been discussed and the artists felt a renewed sense of purpose. But, back to the artists . . . .

What was finally decided upon varied considerably for the three sites. Jordan Park, with its oppressive surroundings, was deemed a good spot for an environmental project. This meant mostly murals, but also included banners, a poetry mural, and construction (if there was time) of a quiet/study space that would help after our group had pulled out. (An outdoors sculpture project later was scrapped because of time limitation and vandalism in the neighborhood.)

Three masonite murals were proposed — each to be mounted side by side on the long end of the room above the speaker's platform. Like church art. The images would all

come from the participants. Help would be provided — in color choice, placement and size, technique, etc. — just as it was needed. In other words, the substance of each mural should not be predetermined. The paper mural the people had already done was quite successful, in a primitive, powerful way, and it was interesting that this goal was the easiest to agree about during the planning.

For Tarpon Springs, there sprung various suggestions. No one felt quite sure how to overcome the language problem, though we all wished to. A Greek play, such as an ancient tragedy, was proposed. But we felt there was already a substantial Hellenic arts program in the community, and didn't want to duplicate that emphasis so purposefully. Also, Greek plays are extremely demanding for the most accomplished actors. . . . We left it that drama should come into the proposal for Tarpon, but that the main direction would be different.

There was also a duplication problem with murals. The site already displayed a variety of disparate art works on the walls, and the town had been painted, literally — here and there — by a previous year's arts group.

Ultimately, it seemed as if the Tarpon clientele, with its ethnic diversity, would be well captured by an oral history project. Now, "oral history" can mean different things to different people, just as "history" can. A subjective/objective problem. For us, oral "history" was the same as oral "reminiscence," and we decided to tape record various participants to find out about their backgrounds, get them to tell stories, etc. In short, their lives would provide subject matter for a variety of group and individual projects, ranging to all areas of our expertise. There could be poetry and prose of an autobiographical nature. There could be paintings done of landscapes or still lives that reflected something of the painters' lives. There could be dramatic enactments of events recalled from experience.

There would be an art festival or fair late in June, near the end of *REVITALIZE*'s tenure, to showcase all this work. Other neighborly centers would be invited to enter their artists' works, as well as to view what we presented.

What we knew about the Clearwater site led us to believe that the production of a play would succeed there. The participants were both literate and outgoing, to judge by the gaggle of continuous conversation. Some had even had theatre experience and almost all had seen plays. If there was to be a problem of commitment in competition with the bridge clubs, etc., that would be a problem to overcome no matter what the project. Also, a play brought in each of our three areas: drama, of course; writing, for it was to be an original script; and visual arts, to help set and costume design. We agreed finally — we'd try a play. In addition, there was provision made for a mural to be worked in when time permitted and the theme of the play had been determined, since the walls were bare, white, and smooth. Images from the script could be represented thus, both dramatically and visually.

The play was to premiere at the Tarpon Springs Art Fair.

What we hoped to "leave behind" was determined in some way by the nature of these three separate proposals. At Jordan Park, the actual, palpable work would be left, as well as a space and the start of materials to produce more visuals. At Tarpon Springs, we would help plan and execute the First Annual Neighborly Center Inc. Arts Fair; we hoped to leave the seed for the Second. And at Clearwater, we hoped that working through all phases of a drama production would spawn interest in doing more plays, i.e., a repertory company of either original or published plays.

We were exhausted from planning, but eager to implement, through sixteen uncertain weeks ahead.

THE BEGINNING OF IMPLEMENTATION

We had the plan for each of the sites. We needed some logistical adjustments to help us carry them out.

There were always more ideas for each site than we had time to carry through. Even after the planning session. For

example, the exercise activity that we occasionally offered at Jordan Park couldn't begin until after the first van-load had arrived. And since the people there were much troubled generally by their limbs and joints, this activity wasn't effective unless extensive. The trouble was, by the time the exercising was over, there was precious little time left to paint before lunch.

It was decided that all activities at all sites must pertain to accomplishing the main goal, and to help achieve this organization, a person (or persons) was designated continuity leader at each place to ensure more efficient time use: the two painters shared this role alternately at Jordan Park; the writer was responsible for detailing activities at Tarpon Springs; and at Clearwater, the drama person coordinated the schedule.

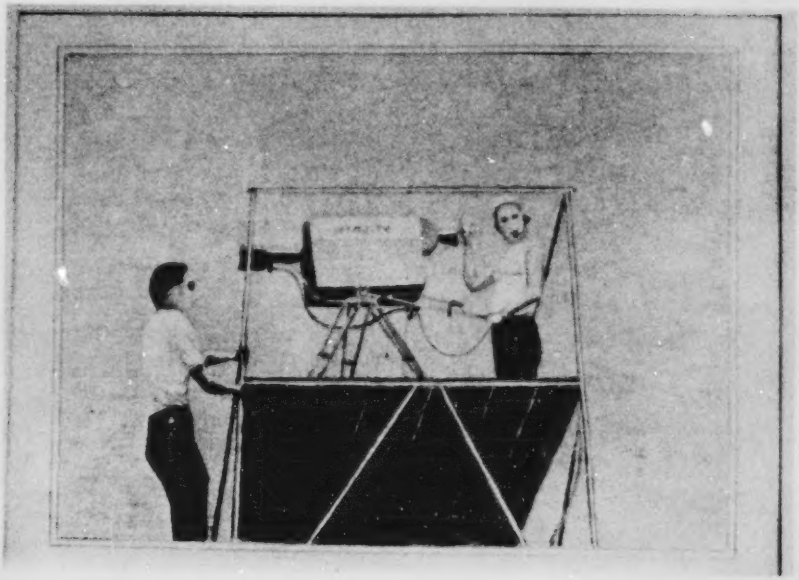
CONTINUITY LEADERS

This concept worked exceptionally well. The artists were aware of their individual responsibilities and knew the site for which they were answerable. This provided an atmosphere conducive to working as a group. Overall, it set up lines of communication that worked.

After we worked out the schedule, we still needed short, weekly planning sessions to use up any leftover steam. They were usually called for Friday, and held at the site we happened to be when the work was finished there. The project director had two questions for each of us, concerning the site of our charge: 1) Is your site progressing toward its goal? 2) What is gonna happen next week?

PLANNING SESSIONS

The artists' explanation of the planning sessions is quite accurate. In the beginning, they were intended to keep the



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artists on track; in the end, they let me know that everything was being accomplished. But then they explain it all very well . . . .

Either surprisingly or not, depending on your view of human nature, these questions often produced a lot of discussion. Question No. 2 could seldom be answered by the continuity leader without reference to the ideas of the others. I think this was especially true during the beginning of implementation, for later the volume of work left to be accomplished seemed to produce quick consensus of who was to do what and where (the why was already clear).

We didn't immediately announce the goals we had set. We weren't sure they were entirely workable. In all aspects, because we had only spent a few weeks with the people and did not have any true measure of a typical, productive session, it was like planting a crop without knowing when harvest time would come. It was still winter season on the Suncoast, and we did not know how many might go back North in a few weeks. (Quite a few did from Clearwater and Tarpon Springs. Nobody left Jordan Park.)

Nobody really needed to know the goals yet, we decided, until there had been enough progress for everyone to see through to the end. And to a certain extent, just having the team of artists concentrated on the same goal, seemed to tone the site activities with a more productive atmosphere.

SECTION THREE

IMPLEMENTATION SITE-BY-SITE

In the next section, the artists describe what occurred in the program at the sites. My views are again in italics. I have tried to say as little as possible and have only interrupted when I felt it was necessary.

The artists decided that David should continue to relate their collective thoughts, but they have included excerpts from their own journals to illustrate feelings during the program. Although the reader has met the artists through David, the reader now has the opportunity to meet them from their own writings.

TARPON SPRINGS

A painting class developed early on. People had participated in various activities, during orientation, and several participants wanted to paint regularly. At first, they would stay in the afternoon after the tables had been cleared. During implementation, they began coming in early to paint during the first hour before the van-loads arrived.

There were two general types: those who had painted before or who had felt a long-time interest, and those who had experienced it for the first time and were surprised at the appeal. A core group of five artists, including some of both of these types, emerged as leaders.

The development of oral histories at this site came as a result of participants being more vocal in their reactions to the artists. Oral histories, or personal remembrances, served as a good jumping-off point for a number of artistic experiences. Whether it was a painting or a dramatic piece recalling a slice of a person's life, these activities did not simply happen, they developed.

The continuity artist for this site was the writer. When they speak of the goal as being an all-day fair, they are implying that this was the method the artists chose to spotlight the oral histories program. At first the plan was to showcase only the Tarpon Springs site, but in the end, all the Neighborly Center, Inc. sites were included.

At this time, certain factors unique to the site should be mentioned. The site manager at Tarpon Springs had the wherewithal to let the artists develop the program in their own way. When support was needed, the site manager provided it. In short, the enthusiasm on the part of the site manager at Tarpon Springs contributed significantly to the success of the program at that site. (Each site manager should, in fact, realize that without his or her active involvement, the program is apt to fail.)

The Tarpon Springs site was selected because it met a number of the required criteria. Program development there was as slow as it was at all of the sites. In the last two months, however, activities progressed at an incredible speed. Energy began to flow so freely that sometimes we just had to stop and watch because somebody else was doing what we had assumed was our job.

JOURNAL ENTRY, KAREN TUCKER,
February 28, 1979

> Although we have about six other people who take part in the art class activities, I think five have become the leaders. They already seem to be thinking of themselves as "the artists" and even try to recruit other participants. They are beginning to communicate with one another about their work, and it is becoming more of a solid group — always meeting in the same area, same time.

The art classes at the beginning were general in concept but developed quickly into activities which related to our direction of personal histories. This approach was general enough to allow variety but restrictive enough to easily bring forth images. One woman, for instance, joined the art class near the middle of the program. She usually spent her waiting time before lunch playing dominoes or amusing everyone with tall tales, occasionally sneaking outside for a smoke. The opportunity to relate her sordid, joyous life on the stock-car circuit and learn to paint, too, was a boon to her. We hardly ever saw her without paintbrush in hand after that.

Some of the painters wanted to do the other arts as well. Many of the rest of the group wanted to do something, either because they wanted to help us get participation, or because they felt at least a vague intrigue for creative work. The goal was a Fair; the method, for those uncommitted, was to be Oral History. We wanted to interview as many people as possible, to learn their backgrounds and to hear their ways of description and account. Projects for individuals or small

groups would follow, with content to be based on life experience.

It took about four weeks to do the interviewing. This may have been too long. At least, it began to seem too cagey — that it was preliminary to art and that art would not necessarily be a natural product of this process. We were disturbed that we were putting off the hardest part of the job — the motivation to concentrate — whilst visiting.

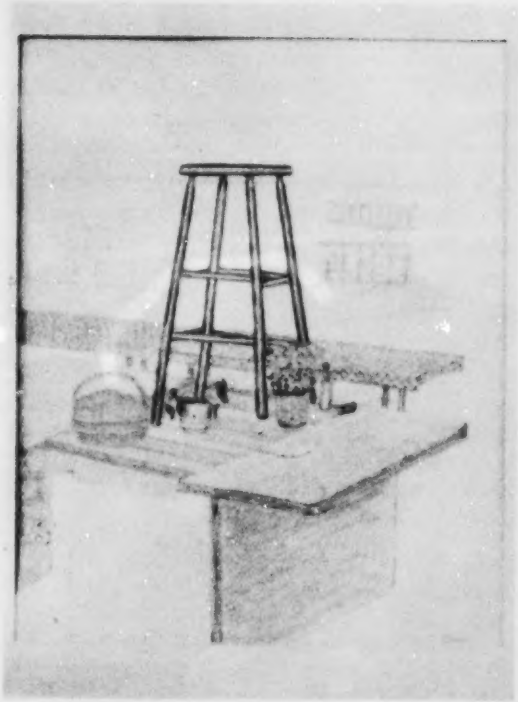
On the other hand, the interviewing was rewarding in two ways. In the course of traveling through life imaginatively, people were able to recall many fascinating incidents and characters. One talked about the shape and coloration of fruit hanging in the market in New York, the first day off the boat . . . the ladies' hairstyles then. One talked about a hunting trip to Hudson Bay country and returning to civilization to encounter mummy-dressed people in protection against the flu epidemic of 1920. One woman was Jimmy Carter's nanny in Plains, Georgia. Greek brides, betrothed through arrangement of their elders, recounted the first meetings with their husbands. We interviewed people for a half hour to an hour, on the average, and almost all demonstrated that the details of their experiences were yet provocative of emotional charge. Quite a few sang into the tape.

The mutual fascination present in this recall process led to the second reward: an easy line of communication between our team and the participants. The woman who had been a professional driver did a series of paintings of her race car. (Other examples are less exact, but there was a noticeable rise in receptiveness to our plans.)

Taping and painting weren't the only activities. Around 11:30 each session, we would suspend these two and get groups together for drama activities, or do poetry projects with the whole group.

Finally, the taping ended. There were many who could be writers. We approached these separately. Some said they would and asked for paper. A few would not, or could not (one man had headaches that lasted a week).

We did not care about content, but asked for life history



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material, to keep to the convenience of the theme.

In late April or May, two new major projects began — a playlet went into production, and a group mural was started.

The playlet material came from the reminiscences of one writer. She had chosen her husband (from two men she had dated) by handing a question to Princess Issie . . . knows all, sees all . . . at a theatre in Chicago. The Princess recommended the sincerity of "Good Ole Joe," and the woman followed up. The right choice, too, she said.

It called for a cast of four, and hours and hours of rehearsal. The premiere was at the Fair.

While the cast rehearsed on the bandshell outside — the weather opened up beautiful new work spaces — the mural project got underway, also outside. We'd carry the board (4 ft. by 8 ft.) out to one of the picnic tables, bring out the paints, and encourage at least one image from everyone present. It was to be palpable legacy of *REVITALIZE!* at Tarpon Springs, symbol of so much work done.

JOURNAL ENTRY, DAISY KOENIG
No Date

The mural at Tarpon Springs started out under the trees. At times we had too many people — it didn't go well. We needed "things" to pull it together. One of our Greek members did a "Parthenon," perched on a rocky promontory. Another of our best artists created a large tree — that pulled it together. He captured the feeling of the trees we were under. He also drew a lighthouse at the end of a body of water that eventually became the Nile River. The Nile was born when one of the ladies did a mysterious tree — the tree looked like it came out of a XII Dynasty tomb, 20th Century B.C. instead of 20th Century A.D. — another time, another space — a real human thing. She knew nothing of Egypt except from the Bible. She also created a "Cleopatra." She used broken twigs for such delicate work — the brushes were too big. All this together became a "Never-Never Land" — Spring Bayou, and Park at one end — the Nile meeting the Parthenon at the other. Our race driver even created a truck and a car.

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The idea of the mural was to involve as many people as possible, especially those not already active in another project. And in relative numbers, this was very successful. At least thirty people spent their energies and concentration on at least one corner of the mural. However, much of the main work was done by painting-class members, and some was even done by the cast of the playlet. This un-division of labor was a problem, for one person might be responsible for two or three main activities — the play, part of the mural, an individual painting that also had to be done by Fairtime, or participation in group singing, which we'd also put into rehearsal by this time.

We "solved" this problem by deciding that the playlet would be rehearsed every day, sometimes twice, for forty-five minutes to an hour. Everyone in the cast would be required for that activity. The rest of the round robin would go on a basis of need: if the central tree image in the mural needed work and the surrounding space was free, that artist would work on the tree. Someone else might stay out of the mural in order to work a day on an individual painting. Singing could be worked in once in every two days. If we didn't go crazy with all these adjustments, it was sometimes amusing to observe such Renaissance activists at work.

About five weeks before the Fair date, we formed a committee to help with details. There would be two categories of participation: studio arts and performing arts (no crafts). The main restriction was that the artist must belong to Neighborly Center, Inc., in Pinellas County, but people from all such centers would be eligible. We planned a poetry wall for visual display of poems or short prose by individual writers. There would be individual paintings displayed, as well as the group murals from Tarpon Springs and from Jordan Park. The banners (from Jordan Park) would fly.

Flying was a problem for outside displays. The breeze in the park was a constant in the afternoons, so one detail of the committee was made responsible for anchoring visual displays, and physical set-up in general. Another detail was assigned publicity and welcoming. One worked on signs, and

the last worked on entertainment.

Entertainment would be inside, on the stage. We'd have the singers and the playlet from Tarpon Springs. The fate of the Clearwater production was not yet determined. For the rest, we'd have to see how many performances would come from the other centers. We didn't know for a while whether to have two shows or one continuous show that people could attend at will, in between viewing the visual displays and taking refreshments. Chryse Flowers, site manager for Tarpon, would be mistress of ceremonies. A big job.

June was the month of finalizing all activities for the Fair date of the 24th.

JOURNAL ENTRY, DAVID DIAL

June, sometime

Dream, Fair.

It's at the Jai-Alai Fronton!

I get to the Fair late. The people in the audience are uneasy, expressing some disappointment. The tiers of seats tower above the stage. There are a lot of people, fairly well dressed. They move about as freely as at a baseball game.

There's a break in the schedule, and Jai-Alai players warm up to perform during this intermission. Suddenly, the game's begun, and a player grabs the ball smartly, but makes a weak throw . . . too short.

Suddenly I realize it's an old man!

There's a collective groan at his miss, but no vehemences, so it's not a betting crowd. He retires to the back amidst shouts of "Manuel! Manuel!"

Mannuo Verro? (doesn't look like him!)

Then equally suddenly Ruth has collapsed. She was downstage left, doing something, and has fallen over. The ambulance comes and they're busy getting her in.

This is a big event, the show, and it doesn't stop with this tragedy, nor does all the audience react — just the group nearest.

I picture her collapse 2 or 3 times, wondering what she was doing on stage in the first place.

Then I'm backstage. I see Chryse from the back, getting mixed applause and laughter from some announcement she's made. She has on a white tux and tails, though her tight bun is un-hatted.

The program's ready to repeat, and I'm anxious to see the play Alexandria walks by, sees me, and says something, though her face

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is drawn in concentration. (She's been on my mind before the dream . . . her song "Holy Joe" has lasted two days for me by now.) Then I'm waking up, aswirl in these visual details. I believe Ruth is going to be all right. There is some strain about the Fair — that it isn't smoother and better — but still it's impressive in that so many people wanted to see it — like a dream network of people who care about the same things, and about each other in a timeless way.
My only regret is not having been able to dream the play like a baby being born.

Dream Analysis. Fair.
It seems to me a deeper concern about the program that I've felt before.

MORE ABOUT TARPON SPRINGS . . .

Because of the surroundings and available space at the Tarpon Springs site, a number of activities could take place simultaneously. While there was singing indoors, painters could work outdoors under the trees, and actors could rehearse in the bandshell. Surrounded with this variety of activities, the artists continually had to remind themselves that their goal was providing each person with the opportunity to develop personal remembrances. This was the thread that held the activities together. As project director, I was responsible for keeping the artists in touch with their goal. Ultimately, it was keeping the activities in tune with the projected goal that became a challenge for me.

There was a tendency on the part of the artists to work more closely with those participants who actively expressed their interest. In other words, the artists discovered "favorites" at Tarpon Springs and preferred working exclusively with them. To discourage this trend, each artist was urged to participate in activities that were unfamiliar to him or her. For example, when the performing artist began to work exclusively with a few of the participants, she was instructed to take part in the discussions of oral histories. This gave her the opportunity to meet with a wider circle of participants. Some participants became interested painters because she talked to

them. More importantly, the performing artist gained new insight into the inter-disciplinary framework of the program.

CLEARWATER

Things didn't go so well. By June, our group had pulled out, except that Daisy went back about once a week to initiate and encourage a mural project.

The question had come up during orientation phase: Would these people ever adjust their routines enough so that we could count on designated times to work together? We also thought they may have a question of their own: Will this group of artists ever propose something interesting enough that we'll feel like committing ourselves to it?

We announced the goal, a play, fairly early in the implementation phase. The idea was always that the material for the script was to come from the participants. Their theme, their scenes, their production. We differed sometimes, and later often, as to how this original material was to be gotten. The first performing artist began holding sessions after lunch with those who said they were interested in some phase of production. This committee fluctuated in size, because of almost any reason, but on a couple of occasions, numbered at least sixteen people.

This was probably late March. We thought we had them. We thought we should begin the scripting process. The first performing artist either thought we had them or didn't; anyway, she continued to hold after-lunch discussions.

Eventually, mid-April, three theme alternatives emerged: Any of these could be treated lightly or not, in tone, and with a variety of approaches. The discussion sessions moved to the mornings, with the whole group rather than just the committee.

Here, the artists express their frustration with the Clearwater site. Assuming a programmatic outlook, they see this site as being unsuccessful. From an administrative point of view, however, the program in Clearwater was indeed a success. One must keep in mind that REVITALIZE! was a pilot program, without precedent and without a working blueprint. Hence, the role played by the Clearwater site should figure significantly in the program's development.

It became obvious that the artists needed to have the confidence of the site manager at each site. At Clearwater, however, the site manager appeared to impede the program from the start. For example, if the artists wanted to work with a different seating arrangement, they were informed that the rules did not permit the moving of furniture. Yet, at the other sites, there was no problem in rearranging furniture. If the artists requested that an announcement be made, the site manager failed to comply. Clearly, the site manager wanted to be in command and, for the sake of the program, we gave in to her demands.

At this point, the artists speak of the first performing artist and their feelings that she delayed the program's progress in positive measures. Whenever the team set out to work up a plan of action for the Clearwater site, the performing artist would demand more time for evaluation. While the "studio" artists were willing to allow the performing artist sufficient time to develop a specific program, audience participation was beginning to dwindle. Eventually, only four participants remained. It became obvious that the performing artist was spending too much time on evaluation and re-evaluation and not enough time on active involvement in the program. At the same time, I was convinced that it was essential for each artist to become actively involved in the program for it to be a success. There simply was not enough time to step back and observe. Predictably, the first performing artist was replaced with a second performing artist, Geoff Todd.

When Geoff began working, a number of activities were already well underway. For instance, the writer's work with the people had led to a design for a play based on partici-

pants' experiences. Geoff tried to take on this project and help the people produce the play.

The Clearwater site also proved that to work well, the program needed plenty of room. Considering the number of people involved at the site, the available space was comparatively limited and the noise factor posed increasing problems for the artists.

Then another hesitation came into the process. The theme had been decided, had been announced. But the next time the discussions were on again, scripting still delayed, etc., until finally, we were back with the list of possible themes. The committee had shrunk back again.

During this time, at this site, our group was at its lowest morale level. There was never a noise problem anywhere like there was at Clearwater. Before the May exodus of migrating snowbirds, it seemed like every chair was filled to chirping in the crowded hall (except oddly, now and then, we would find that over half had flown the coop for a day, including, usually, most all our list of potential players).

We tried holding some morning activities in the back room, a little odd space where the food was unpacked and put in trays, and where there was less noise. But the site manager couldn't make up her mind — we couldn't work there — we could — no, we couldn't. Back in the main room, mornings, not many people were still interested in discussing theme possibilities. Nearly everybody was interested in discussing something, the breeze, with their neighbors. There was noise! We no longer had them — though we continued to try.

People started moving back North. A few stayed committed to the play. Two couples. Four people. It was May. Our writers wrote a short play, based on individual contributions to American History. It had parts for four people. By the time the second performing artist joined our group, one couple had dropped out. We recruited another woman. Couldn't get another man. Our writer joined the cast. Re-

hearsals were finally going on, mornings mostly, in a new (unfinished) room where there was at least quiet, even if we were isolated from the group at large.

When the remaining, original couple wavered in commitment, then also dropped out, we had nothing left to go on in drama. We split. The Fair was getting near, and much was left to do at other sites.

The people at Clearwater were no less talented than elsewhere. Many were just as fascinating to talk with. They were, rather, as a group, somewhat more highstrung, if that can describe a group at all.

JOURNAL ENTRY, DAVID DIAL

Some time in April

Play, Clearwater.

Of course, at Clearwater, it can't be encouraging, no matter who or how long we get to know someone . . . but that's confusing to the emotions because contact with the participants still seems a natural lead-off to involvement.

In theory, we're right. Getting to know them should be equal to getting them. Just, we must be more intimidating to these highstrung people than we think — to fail to engage more — or art is.

They were such a challenge, and the time lost seemed such a waste, that Daisy, naturally, wanted to try a plan of her own. (We had all wanted at one time or another to try a plan of our own.)

JOURNAL ENTRY, DAISY KOENIG

No Date

Took canvas to Clearwater site. Talked to the people about a mural. Surprising response! Maybe the place was too small for four of us at once. We should have tried it two at a time and rotate. I really don't think they knew why we were there — or cared! They seem to care a lot about themselves.

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JORDAN PARK

The mural projects didn't begin immediately and so were not announced. Instead, a series of activities were set, each with the idea of increasing visual awareness. Paintings and drawings were done — in response to images of a story or poem that was read; in response to the participants' recall of the Jordan Park neighborhood and building; in response to photographs of the natural environment and to reprints of art masterpieces.

Each of these responses was done individually, often resulting in a new and complete composition. Highlights of these compositions would later be traced by *REVITALIZE!* artists and reproduced on two of the mural panels.

It would appear, with any program as expansive as this program, REVITALIZE!, there would be at least one site that neither the artists nor the project director would have disagreements. Jordan Park was that site. From the initial visit, the people there were cautiously receptive.

This in no way implies that this was an easy audience. They were tough in their questioning. When the participants and the artists became acquainted, the success started to develop.

At Jordan Park, one lady was impatiently stamping her foot when the artists arrived five minutes late, and was disturbed that they might not show up at all. She had become so active in her painting that she was looking forward to that day. The artists were shocked because she never before had outwardly shown her interest in the painting session. Until that moment, they were unaware of the importance the woman placed on the session. Also, the woman never had painted prior to the program.

JOURNAL ENTRY, KAREN TUCKER
April 4, 1979

> Mr. Risby's drawing today was beautiful. He went outside with me and I decided to draw the building with two trees in front — overlapping — and he was pleased with his new discovery. As he drew the shapes and painted them in — some solids and some dots — it all took on a completely different appearance. David and I decided he was a true artist. David hoped he would (not really) somehow spoil the effect and said, "I don't want to be in awe of Mr. Risby."

During the gathering phase of these images, as later while painting the murals, we would often play music on the house stereo system. We considered the response in paint to these stimuli (Mozart, Bessie Smith, Spanish guitar music) another kind of environmental awareness. Even the checker players quietened noticeably when the music was playing.

JOURNAL ENTRY, DAVID DIAL
No Date

> Daisy has brought this revolting Mantovani record. It sounds like the supermarket Muzak, except not as clinical. I remark that cows give more milk to such music playing.
>
> The remark sits on the table for a minute until it is deciphered. They buzz about it a while, seeming actually much more consternated that cows would get to hear music of any kind, and anyone'd bother to gauge it — so removed are they from the impacts of research.
>
> These same people sit around the same mural and recount instances of seeing spirits of dead people. Common knowledge depends on where you're common to. (For some reason, two worlds work here in unreasonable harmony.)

People wrote group (composite) poems on where they grew up . . . giving a sensory image of the place in one or two lines each. They wrote individual poems about quiet: quiet times, quiet places, quiet activities. These were usually successful, since something quiet that happens is something important, requiring concentration. Some of the "quiet"

poems were 20-30 lines in length, which was a major composition for people unused to writing much of any kind, and poetry hardly at all.

The "writing" of poems at Jordan Park, as elsewhere, was accomplished by a method devised by New York poet Kenneth Koch (who has worked on poetry projects, both with children and with clients of nursing homes). The writer would announce the topic, giving as illustration a few sample poems. He would encourage people to be thinking of what they wanted to say, in detail. How they wanted to say it.

Then members of our group would go among them with pad and pencil, ready to take dictation . . . ready to listen for the first line, and ready to ask for more. During this dictation process, we would continually read back what we'd recorded so far, asking if it sounded the way the poet wanted.

JOURNAL ENTRY, DAISY KOENIG

Early June

> David and I had two days alone at Jordan Park — David worked with Mrs. Hammond both days (on her poem), off and on, for she didn't want to be rushed with her poem about the seashore. (She is a very beautiful woman, very aware and sensitive, crippled with arthritis.) She finally finished her poem and David copied it over in a "structured" form. He let me read it — it flowed like the sea. He read it to the entire group. They loved it. I hope he can get to do others.

Because of time limitation and the visual focus there, we didn't work with prose writing per se. There were many times, however, while painting especially, when people told their early experiences, told stories of haunts and spirits, or occasionally told of dreams they'd had. Many referred often to stories from the Bible. And many had heard the folk tales that we read once or twice, and they would tell back other, similar tales. We didn't record or publish any of these stories, but rather let them stand as contributions to the working atmosphere.

We didn't do drama activities much.

Around mid-April, the first mural was begun. Painting had become an important activity at Jordan Park. It wasn't therapeutic so much as interesting — people were not absolving anxieties so much as communicating. Once the board was laid across two tables and the van-loads had arrived, every available space was usually filled.

JOURNAL ENTRY, KAREN TUCKER
April 25, 1979

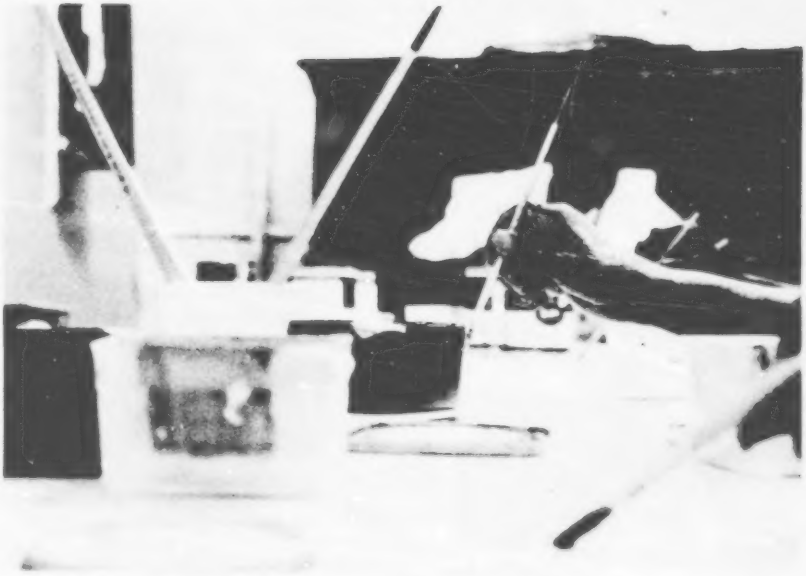
> Everyone is wanting to take part in the mural. It is sometimes, though, a very tiring and demanding project — always thinking of new images and colors and moving around and reaching over. We have made it, I believe, as convenient as we can — and there is no complaining. We just must remember that they will get tired. We must also remember not to do too much for them.

Like the paper mural done during orientation phase, this first one on board was to be spontaneous. It had no theme other than immediacy. One tree begot another. The bushes and flowers of one corner soon spread over the whole area, with many hands contributing. A park scene was forming: no motors, very little of man-made structures except the edge of a church taking up one border. Sky held both sun and moon. The face in the moon expressed something benign and unaccountable about the unity below.

Only the birds had to be suggested, and extra leaves. Then all second coats were added. Early in May, it was finished. Everyone felt the flush, for something greater than planned seemed evident.

JOURNAL ENTRY, KAREN TUCKER
April 16, 1979

> I introduced the project with the idea that they should think about all of the activities we had had in the past few weeks and that our mural would be a giant landscape — preferably one which would remind them of this geographical area. It started with a giant tree, drawn by Mrs. Lewis, as sort of a divider and organizer.



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The second mural was composed of images double-enlarged from the early renditions, which had been selected and traced by one of our artists. This time, there was no horizon line, and house plants, a saxophone piping notes to "He Lives," and multi-colored chain-lengths, stood in a more abstract juxtapositioning. Solid color panels sent planes throughout the whole — sometimes in front, sometimes behind — so that a shimmer came as part of the effect. We think this mural took the least time to paint.

JOURNAL ENTRY, KAREN TUCKER
May 7, 1979

> As we started the new mural it was exciting to explain how I gridded and blew up their designs — and they were impressed with themselves as they saw their work larger. This seems to be a good approach at this time because they want a break in developing new images — a chance to get away from the same type of images they have been coming up with and re-look at and develop old images. This also gives them more of a chance to think about color and technical skill — and they are.

The third mural was the "pig" mural. It didn't start that way . . . started rather as a collection of original-sized images which our other artist had traced and arranged on the board into almost a kind of fantastic rural village. Houses were the same size as the church; all were smaller than the carnival wagon. There were no crops other than flowers and the flora of green and yellow and purple dreams. A rainbow carried into land, under the moon, and pinpointed the pot of gold.

JOURNAL ENTRY, DAISY KOENIG
Late May

> Karen had a marvelous idea — she thought there should be more pigs — maybe 30 — to pull it together. (The mural was too busy — taken from their drawings — quite small.) Great idea! Now it's the "Pig Mural!"

This third mural was done on second wind. It was mid-June before it was completed, and the people thought they had had enough of mural painting, maybe. The multiplying pigs supplied the novelty, but also there was something serious learned of craftsmanship by then. A kind of discipline.

We promised they would be erected, these three murals. But first they would be hauled to Tarpon Springs, to the Fair.

Many wanted to go, to the extent that they cancelled plans to be at church, or cut their attendance short in order to get to the pick-up point for the bus that Sunday. It was a long trip, to the northern tip of the county.

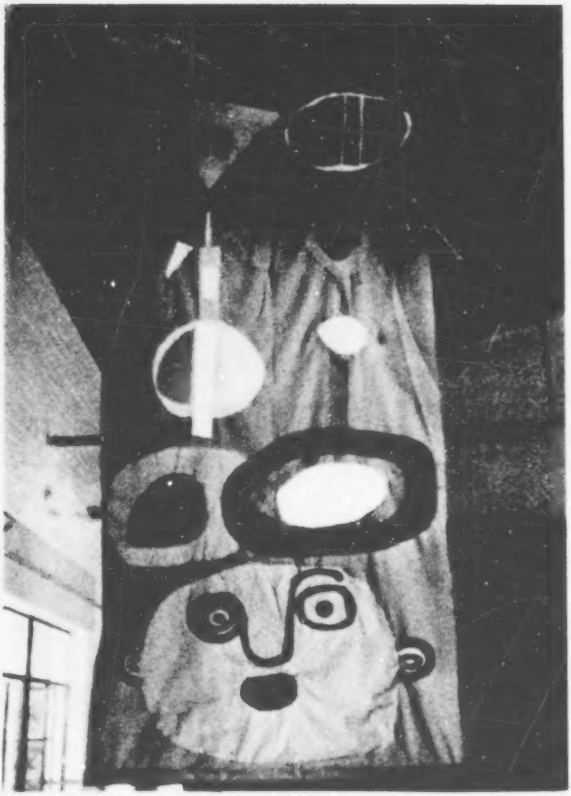
They already had practice at going. In February, we managed free tickets and transportation to a Gospel Musical playing downtown: "Your Arms Too Short To Box With God." This they hugely enjoyed, the fourteen attending.

Then, in June, they toured the Museum of Fine Arts, some thirty strong, thanks to Daisy's arranging. Many paintings in the collection had seldom received as curious an inspection before. And, back at their places at the murals, there was talk indeed.

JOURNAL ENTRY, DAISY KOENIG
June 6, 1979

My, Oh my, did *they love it!*

So they finished the last mural and a few helped cut cloth images for the banners. And they signed up to go to the Fair. They knew, after all, that their work was worthy of some show.



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SECTION FOUR

FINAL WORD

This program has been gratifying for its successes. However, from start to completion, our goal has always been to design a blueprint of the process that goes into developing such a program. Our intention has been to illustrate the step-by-step development, from design to orientation to implementation to development. This we have accomplished.

I would advocate *REVITALIZE!* to anyone who wants to develop effective arts programming with the aging. I would advocate this program for many reasons, but one more than any other. *REVITALIZE!* works!

In this last section are the writings of many of the participants of the *REVITALIZE!* program. Some are by people who had never tried to write something personal before, because of the intimidation of the blank page. Mrs. Hammond's work is especially good because she had never written poetry. We had many results that we could brag on, but this was not the intent of our program. Possibly, that could be another book, but in a large sense this book is the result of the participants and not the artists or the author.

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JORDAN PARK NEIGHBORLY CENTER, INC.

The Seashore, The Dog, and Me

by Alberta Hammond

The big dog and me
would walk down there
to the seashore
Early in the morning
before they were even up

A very proud dog
He kind of pranced
very protective of me he was
And even though I was in a strange place
I felt secure.

I sat there and watched the waves
coming in. I watched each one reach
its destination, which was the edge of the water.

Many times I thought that I surely would reach
the destination of the problems
I was having at that time.

I hate to leave the shore
I just want to stay there
To see the big waves rolling in
That's a thrilling thing

On our last visit to the water
That is, the dog and me
I reached the conclusion that something
without future guilt
permanent and very desirable
would happen for me.

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TARPON SPRINGS NEIGHBORLY CENTER, INC.

ALBUM

by Neighborly Center Participants

I grew up in Thomasville, Georgia
where they have a beautiful park
with trees and benches and I remember
the pleasant smell of roses
and the things for kids
to play on.

I was born in Canada fair
where there was beautiful air
in a little village with a blacksmith shop.

in Prince's Island, Constantinople
a beautiful island
it looked like Acapulco
and was full of tourists in the summer.

in Alsace-Lorraine, a province
full of Catholics and soldiers
and it smelled like wine —
a drunken army.

in Austria
where my mother and father
milked the cows
on a big farm.

I grew up in Plains, Georgia
where there was a lovely,
big, two-story wood school
with a long porch
and it set in the middle of a park
with nothing but pretty pines.

I grew up in East Chicago, Indiana —
a little town I liked —
it was clean
and green
and I felt comfortable there.

Dorothy Kotlaba

The girls and boys who we all played together would also wait for our mailman who picked up the mail at the corner mail box to be brought back to the Post Office for sorting out. This mail carrier was like a sulkey — horse-drawn two-wheel cart.

We children would like to ride to the mail box on this sulkey. So the mailman would let us have turns. Each day one would get the chance to ride from one mail box and then get off at the next stop.

Our streets were of cobble wood. We had a lot of horses going down the street. We also liked it when the water wagon wet the streets to cool it off — wash the dirt off the streets. We kids ran behind the wagon to get sprinkled on.

The peddlars would come down the streets calling out their wares early to avoid the sun. Toward evening we had a nice man come down the street that made waffles that were out of this world. He sprinkled them with powdered sugar. Two waffles — 5 cents!

We also could buy 1-cent ice cream cone, and a handful of mixed candy put onto a newspaper for us to eat from. Popcorn in a green and white bag flowing with real butter. Soda pop, 3 cents: strawberry, cherry and cream soda. Lucky stones, buttons, Hershey chocolate squares, all 1 cent. Licorice, too.

William George Breckow

Mr. Breckow is the oldest man at Tarpon Springs Neighborly Center. During his early life he moved back and forth between Michigan and Canada. Adventure was abundant. The hunting trip that he recounts below took place soon after he returned from World War I, after being badly wounded by shrapnel . . . after the transport ship was hit by a hurricane, which alternately pitched the bunked-in patients vertically on their feet and on their heads. But those are other stories . . .

Two of my neighbors, they were great hunters. So we took a trip up into the Hudson Bay country. Possibly 200 miles from civilization.

We had to wait until the ground froze so we could get across the muskegs and swamps. We had a very, very profitable hunting season. And on the way coming back out of the forest, we noticed people that had white bandages tied over their nose and mouth.

And one of the natives that lived up there, he said, "Well, what are you doin' coming out here in the woods there and haven't got your face protected?" He said, "Don't you know there's an awful bad epidemic of the flu goin' on?"

So that was something else to contend with. A person at that time . . . you know if you contracted that flu . . . you might last for 24 hours and you might not. It took the people very fast. 1919 and 20.

Mr. Breckow went on to describe the death from flu of the son of one of his hunting partners, which took place on their return.

And then, during this time that we's in the woods, we got lost. The compass didn't help us very much because it was such foggy weather. No sunshine, remember. For three days we just had to do the best we could.

It come a rain, and we got wet. The matches that we had in our pockets, they got wet. So we couldn't make a fire to heat our coffee, and all we had at that time was some frozen bear meat.

An appetizing dish is to try to eat some raw bear meat. The first bite, you know, just about choked ya, but the second and the third one they went down pretty good.

— If I had to do all that over again, I'd do it over again.

Ledra Brown

Ledra Brown's paintings are often of Georgia landscapes. One of them she titled, "Old Home of Miss Lillian . . . Plains, Ga." She told us about it: her family farmed with the Carters. The kids called her "Nanny," and she says she whipped Jimmy more'n once.

At the time of the following exchange, Jimmy was about ten, and Ledra was "deep" in her twenties.

Out in the yard, we was out playin'. Throwin' the ball back and forth.

Jimmy stopped and said, "Hey, Ledra."

"What?"

"You know what you're looking at now?"

"I'm lookin' at you."

"I ain't talkin' about just lookin' at me. I'm talkin' about what I'm gonna be when I get grown."

"What's that?"

"That's the President of the United States."

"Well, then, you'll be my President."

— Jimmy was nice, you know — very nice except when somebody make him mad.

Peter Panagakis

Peter was born in Sparta, Greece. By the time of World War II, he was head of (U.S.) Naval Intelligence in the Tarpon Springs area. His main responsibility was inspecting the sponge boats for contraband, since many of the captains had not become U.S. citizens, and many of them were also from the Dodecanese Islands, which at the time belonged to Italy.

Peter will always tell you a joke. The following experience was, in a way, a joke on him:

A man came here, and he went to the only hotel that existed here. On the main street here, and it used to be a Post Office. The old hotel.

The man went and engaged a room in the hotel. Then he started one by one to ask the local Greeks who had boats about their islands, and what was the best place to land troops, and what was the best place to get enough water, and so forth.

(Our government then at that time was planning — FDR was planning — an invasion of Europe, through Egypt, to take over the Grecian Islands. Liberate Greece and take em around. But Churchill stopped that. Churchill said, "I will take care of Greece. I will liberate Greece." So he had his way.)

So my duty was to go and find, who is this individual. We didn't know who it was. They didn't know — the people (captains) didn't know either.

Every one of the captains knew me personally. They knew I was Naval Intelligence.

I went to the hotel and asked for the man, and asked for his credentials. He was Greek. He showed me his credentials, signed by the famous . . . (what was his name? He was in charge of O.S.S. He was very famous. What was his name . . .? Colonel . . . not Donovan, but an Irish name of some kind . . . Shame on me, I don't remember the name.)

So, he showed me his credentials. Office of Strategic Services. So I immediately reported by teletype to Tampa, to my superior. And my superior reported it to the Admiral in Miami.

And the next thing I knew I got a copy of a letter sent to Washington, to the Navy Department: "Our representative in Tarpon Springs caught up with a spy. Unfortunately, he was one of our own."

A good explanation.

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The primary purpose of this book is to encourage development of arts and aging programs throughout the State of Florida. While developing the *REVITALIZE!* program for the Fine Arts Council of Florida, one factor became apparent: the state had made no major strides to date in the field of arts and aging. One reason for this was that aging agencies felt uncomfortable with the arts world, and arts agencies felt uncomfortable with the aging field. The result was ineffective arts and aging programming. So, a bridge had to be built. This book represents that bridge. It is not a course in theory. Rather it tells of the trials and errors faced by a team of artists who developed and implemented an arts and aging program to be utilized by any interested agency. What is presented here is a program that incorporates the concepts behind existing programs, as well as the advice of gerontologists and experts on aging, to develop a new approach to arts programming with the aging.

— *Terrell J. Kuykendall*

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